

BYE-18071-63

Copy 2 of 5

2 AUG 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Director of Central Intelligence

THROUGH : Deputy Director (Support) */s/ Kgl* 02 AUG 1963SUBJECT : NRO Security
(Release of Information)

1. This memorandum is for information only. Particular reference is made to paragraphs 6 and 7.

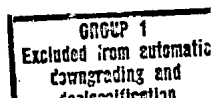
2. Reference is made to my memorandum to you dated 29 July 1963 (BYE-16770-63) wherein an assessment was made as to the damage effected by the news release on 29 July 1963 regarding "Capsule Recovery" activities in the Pacific area.

3. There have been three public releases approved in recent weeks, all of which were approved by the NRO prior to release. None of these were coordinated with CIA as provided for in the 13 March 1963 NRO agreement. As indicated in the reference, action has been taken to insure that future releases are coordinated with this Office. On 25 July 1963, the story entitled "Hitchhiker Satellite Launched in New Orbit After Four Days" appeared in the Washington Post, and in a similar story in the New York Times. The approved release No. 1242-63 by the Department of Defense, Office of Public Affairs, was concurred in by the NRO. The Washington Post story went beyond the scope of the approved copy, and contained references to the primary launch being a "secret" one, and speculated that it was a photo-reconnaissance type of satellite. In fact, it was a LANYARD shot from the Pacific missile range which carried this secondary "Hitchhiker" vehicle into orbit, whence it was launched into its own orbit four days after the primary vehicle launch. The NORAD SPADATS stations picked up this new vehicle at that time, and listed it in its unclassified tracking data publications as being a secondary vehicle from a primary launch on 27 June 1963. Thus, pursuant to current United Nations agreement, both the primary and the secondary "Hitchhiker" vehicles are listed in the UN Registry of Space Vehicles. The payload of the primary vehicle is, of course, not registered. The scientific aspect of the "Hitchhiker" vehicle is identified in the release.

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4. According to the NRO Staff, this particular release was complicated by a situation which arose at the time of the release which may have accounted for the reporter inserting other information in the Washington Post article. The reporter queried Mr. Sylvester regarding the reason for the delay in releasing the "Hitchhiker" story. He specifically asked if the delay was because of the DOD secret directives requiring that this information be withheld. Mr. Sylvester is said to have "forgotten his script" and left the impression that this was the reason. His statement more appropriately would have been that it is general policy in the cases of scientific experiments of this nature that the release is not made until the scientific personnel have had an opportunity to make preliminary assessments of the data received. This "miscue" is said to have caused the reporter to become incensed, and may have contributed to the additional "speculative" information being inserted into the story.

5. The other story contained the information that the 100th Agena stage vehicle had been fired from the Vandenburg site. It had been similarly approved within the NRO. To date there is no indication that this release has been published by the press except in the West Coast area.

6. This Office is keeping under continuing review all aspects of this problem area. It is considered that the DOD directive S-5200.13 is adequate to control the release of information sensitive to the NRO mission, and that the Departments concerned are working under its provisions. The single DOD office [Assistant to the Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs)] established as the focal point appears to be a satisfactory arrangement. We have been advised that, in every case, the NRO is brought into any release decision appropriate to the NRO charter. In these instances, the NRO did not, however, coordinate with CIA. In the future the NRO Staff will coordinate with this Office and obtain approval on every item being processed to them for release action.

7. It is felt that the areas of release of scientific information derived from secondary payloads in overhead reconnaissance vehicles will continue to be most difficult. As stated in the reference, the wealth of information published in years past regarding satellite activities of the

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"spy in the sky" variety places any release story at the whim of the editorial effort of news writers. This Office will take action to deter the release of articles which, in themselves, touch on sensitive areas, or can serve as the mechanisms for press speculation.

SIGNED

R. L. Bannerman
Director of Security

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